

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN

A Woman Song-Writer—Some Watches Owned by Society Dames—Paris Fashions in Underwear.

SINGING NEGRO SONGS.

Mrs. Jeannette Robinson Murphy Analyzes the Most Popular Music of the Season.

She Shows How Its Weird Effects Are Governed Unconsciously by Certain Set Rules Among the Negroes.

The popularity of negro melodies and dark songs—a discrimination and a difference—has not been confined to the theatres and music halls. When women

dies rendered by one unfamiliar with the negroes instantly lost its charm. I finally grew so curious about the matter that a few years ago, in Tallahassee, I set about to solve the problem for my own satisfaction. I would listen for hours to the cook crooning softly at her work, or go out in the fields, apparently to watch the laborers, but in reality to study their songs. And at night I would steal down to the negro cabins and coax the women and children to sing their "round" songs, watching for every change of inflection or peculiarity of vocal expression.

"I found, to my delight, that the weird effect of the plantation songs is from the

FACTS ABOUT VIOLETS.

Containing Also Hints to Women of the Profit and Pleasure of Violet Farming.

There are said to be nearly two hundred species of the violet known and one hundred grown almost at our doors. Of all these, however, a certain bloom found at the foot of the Alps is accounted to be the most fragrant.

The largest violets found in the world are those at Nice and Cannes, where there are miles of these simple flowers grown for perfume. As the violets need shade for growing, they form extra crops in flower farms, and after the first year are of little or no expense to the grower.

The woman in business will find nothing more agreeable nor remunerative than violet farming, according to the word of a man of wide experience in the business world. As a matter of fact, this line of work is being widely taken up by women and with unwonted success. With the building of the hot-house, the services of an experienced gardener the first year, and the means and ability to patiently await the initial crop, monetary responsibility, at least, is about at an end. For after the first coming the violets increase thereafter an hundred fold with very little care and a temperature of only 60 degrees, and there is always a grasping demand for them.

The most desirable, because the most natural and lasting violet perfume of today is that of an important Parisian house on the Place de la Madeleine. A few drops of this delicious odor suggests the very essence of a whole bunch of the graceful flowers, and yet it is well known that this is a wholly artificial color. Not a violet has been used in it. So well guarded a secret are the means employed in its manufacture this house has become the envy of the world of perfumers. The demand for violet perfumes is so much in excess of the supply it is a very difficult matter to obtain the genuine article. Violet being the most evanescent of odors, it is therefore the most costly. So nearly all of the weaker mixtures, for instance the violet waters, are composed almost entirely oforris root, civet, or vanilla.

Another industry that has fallen in woman's way of late is the candying of violets for the confectioners' trade. One woman in New Jersey, who farms these flowers successfully, can hardly keep pace with her private orders for this dainty confection. Among the confections to be found in France and Italy are small bunches of the candied violets, with long stems and surrounded by artificial leaves, the whole tied fancifully with ribbon after the manner of "my lady's" flower candy.

The great bunches of purple bloom which greet the new comer to Paris from every white-capped flower vender's cart may be had at this time of the year for the sum of 50 centimes or, at the most, a franc.

NOVELTIES IN SUMMER LINGERIE FRESH FROM THE FRENCH CAPITAL.

Even the tailor-made young person of athletic tastes and attire imitating masculine modes must waver in her allegiance to "union" suits and di-

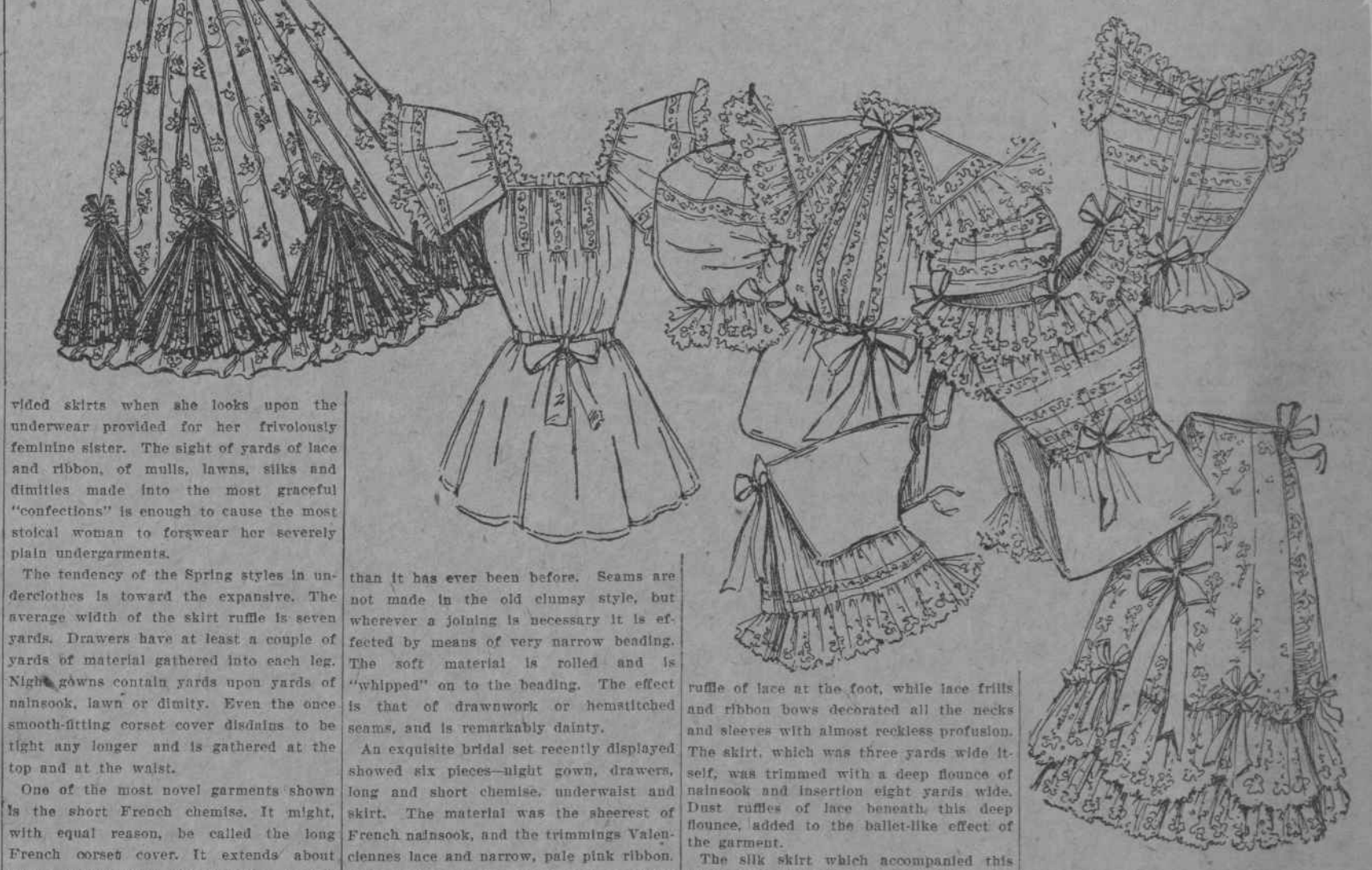
than is customary, consists of an accordion-plated ruffle, which contains an immense quantity of gathered mull or nainsook. A couple of additional short ruffles are put on at the bottom beneath the deep ruffle.

As for the sewing on fine French underwear, it is positively a work of art. Machine stitching is, of course, tabooed, but the hand work is much more exquisite

section and lace stood out over the shoulders. The drawers were not only trimmed with a full ruffle about the bottom, but were slashed half way up the side to admit an extra amount of fullness. Ribbon bows trimmed them on the side.

The chemise proper and the corset cover were made of alternate lines of nainsook and of Valenciennes insertion, arranged horizontally. The chemise boasted a deep

Above that a second lace ruffle was festooned and caught here and there with ribbon bows. Brides are not the only persons who array themselves in gorgeous skirts. Dresden silk ones, with as great a multiplicity of ruffles as the bridal petticoats boast, are favorites. Black lace ruffles in fan shapes trim them. Sometimes butterflies of lace are fastened with the wings overlapping. Besides the gossamer at the waist-line and the fullness given by the flounces, many of



vided skirts when she looks upon the underwear provided for her frivolously feminine sister. The sight of yards of lace and ribbon, of mulls, lawns, silks and dimities made into the most graceful "confections" is enough to cause the most stoical woman to forgo her severely plain undergarments.

The tendency of the Spring styles in underclothes is toward the expansive. The average width of the skirt ruffle is seven yards. Drawers have at least a couple of yards of material gathered into each leg.

Night gowns contain yards upon yards of nainsook, lawn or dimity. Even the once smooth-fitting corset cover dissolves to be tight any longer and is gathered at the top and at the waist.

One of the most novel garments shown is the short French chemise. It might, with equal reason, be called the long French corset cover. It extends about twenty inches below the waist line. It will be popular only among the sylph-like sisterhood, for it adds to the size of the hips without acting really as a skirt—a thing which the stout woman could not tolerate.

"Bicycle drawers" are another novelty. They probably receive their name from the fact that they are the garments absolutely unlikely to be worn by bicyclists. They contain more material than the old-fashioned skirt. They have the usual deep yoke band and the spreading leg. The trimming, which begins much higher up

than it has ever been before. Seams are not made in the old clumsy style, but wherever a joining is necessary it is effected by means of very narrow heading. The soft material is rolled and is "whipped" on to the heading. The effect is that of drawnwork or hemstitched seams, and is remarkably dainty.

An exquisite bridal set recently displayed showed six pieces—light gown, drawers, long and short chemise, underwaist and skirt. The material was the sheerest of French nainsook, and the trimmings Valenciennes lace and narrow, pale pink ribbon.

The nightgown was made with a blouse front—an effect produced by a full gathering at the neck and a drawing string at the waist. Vertical lines of insertion trimmed the blouse front. The puffed sleeves, which ended at the elbow, were trimmed with horizontal lines of the insertion and with deep lace frills. The wide sailor collar was similarly decorated.

The short chemise, made with a square, low neck, had the fullness gathered in by a ribbon drawing string at the waist. Instead of sleeves, epaulettes of nainsook, in-

truding skirts when she looks upon the underwear provided for her frivolously feminine sister. The sight of yards of lace and ribbon, of mulls, lawns, silks and dimities made into the most graceful "confections" is enough to cause the most stoical woman to forgo her severely plain undergarments.

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MRS. JEANNETTE ROBINSON MURPHY.

gather together for tea drinking and to listen to papers there is pretty apt to be some young woman with banjo or guitar to enliven the intervals by crooning "Mammy's Little Alabama Coon" or "The Yellow Rose."

One of the most popular of these is Mrs. Jeannette Robinson Murphy, herself a composer and the writer of the new swinging waltz song "Minnie McCoy." As others of these singers of negro songs, Mrs. Murphy is Southern born and bred, although her father, Norman Robinson, was a New Yorker and at one time editor of the Examiner and Chronicle. Mrs. Murphy, in addition to the infection of the voice and modulation of tone essential to singing plantation fashion which she brings from the South, has made a special study of negro music from a more theoretical point of view.

"As a child I loved their songs," she said when questioned about it, "and used to follow my old black mammy about when she was busy just to hear her sing, caring more for the sound of her voice than for the sweetest Northern music."

"As I grew up I began to wonder as to the reason of the strange fascination of the negro songs for all classes of people. I found it was not merely in the music or words, for the quaintest of dark melo-

observance among the darkies, probably unconsciously, of certain set rules in regard to accent and breathing. They never take breath as we do at the end of a line or phrase, but always at the beginning of a fresh phrase, connecting their sentences with that peculiar wavering tone so full of pathos and melancholy.

"Another singular thing is the heavy accent on the latter part of every monosyllable word, thus giving two musical notes to each word of one syllable, with the same long drawn, wailing sound between the tones.

"There are many other peculiarities in the exact rendering of the plantation songs, but these are the most essential and the most strongly marked that have come to my notice."

Mrs. Murphy does not confine herself to parlor recitals, but gives her services gratuitously to prisons, hospitals and missions.

"Maud Muller and Trilby," the little skit that appeared in the Sun during the Trilby craze, was Mrs. Murphy's first essay in metropolitan journalism. It was copied by dozens of papers in this country and in England and finally came to the notice of Charles Dudley Warner, who sent it to Du Maurier.

Mrs. Murphy's most recent songs are "Open the Gates," a pathetic ballad, and "Old Picnic Grounds," a negro melody.

HOUSECLEANING TACTICS.

Hints for Meeting the Annual Trial with Comparative Ease.

II.

While the systematic housekeeper is renovating the sleeping-room, she should dispose of the winter garments. Furs, wraps and gowns which are not to be worn until next fall should first be thoroughly cleaned and then carefully packed. To pack away any article of attire without first making it fresh is a crime which should bar the person committing it from the society of good housewives.

Furs may be satisfactorily renovated at home. Short-haired skins, such as seal and ermine, should be rubbed against the grain with soft flannel until the hair is reversed. Spots should then be rubbed lightly with flour and the fur finally removed by vigorous shaking. Long-haired furs may be cleaned by scouring them with hot bran. After this has been done roll the garments in paper, tie up in linen cases with pepper and camphor bags, and consign to chests.

The spring housecleaning period is not only the time when winter clothes should be laid away, but it is also the accepted season for plumbing. The services of the plumber are likely to be more necessary than those of any other person in the spring renovation of the bathroom. A beautifully enameled tub is a small compensation for sewer gas. Consequently before any more superficial details are attended to an expert opinion concerning such homely things as drains and pipes should be obtained.

The bathtub will be less trouble to keep clean if it is painted with enamel paint. This may be purchased already mixed, and the least skillful woman will be able to apply it satisfactorily. The tub should, of course, be kept perfectly dry until after the last coat of paint has been applied. The walls of the bathroom back of the tub and washbowl, if they are not tiled or of marble, should be "papered" with blueish in the patterns. This will permit unlimited splashing of water without damage. The floor may well be covered with the same material.

If the bathroom has not been equipped with wire soap and sponge trays, shelves for bottles, hooks for clothes, racks for towels, and the like, there is no time like the days of Spring housecleaning in which to repair the omission.

Before descending to the lower part of the house, the mistress should discover if her mattresses need renovating. If she uses feather ones she should destroy them, for in the opinion of physicians they are positively pestiferous. Hair mattresses, if they are hard and dirty, may be freshened by rubbing the ticks, removing the hair, washing the ticks, picking the hair and putting it in a dry, airy place for several days.

When the ticking is dry it should be filled lightly with the hair and tacked together again.

If painting is done in the bedrooms, pails of fresh water should stand about uncovered. This will prevent attacks of painters' colic.

CYCLING NOTES.

War is being waged by the pen, which is mightier than the sword, about the propriety of women riding diamond frame wheels. The subject is interesting on its merits, and it is made more interesting because just behind it is the costume question. Experts urge their superior mechanical construction as a reason why they should be used, and almost all the manufacturers testify that the recommendation is having the effect of regularly increasing the demand by women for them. And, conformably, the makers' catalogues contain special mention of them. But there are many riders and some writers who denounce their use, the former in most instances because they fear they could not learn to mount them, and the latter in every instance because it is assumed that their use involves the abandonment of skirts. With so much good ground for contention compromise will probably come, and, indeed, is already coming, as many women have discovered that the diamond frame can be safely and comfortably ridden in the ordinary divided skirt.

Two symptoms of the gradual emancipation of women being brought about by the bicycle are already observable this season. The first is the much more general abandonment of the ordinary corset. The other is the frequent acknowledgment that the use of the leggin is now a matter of discretion. Last year, even indoors in the height of summer, when no sane woman would have thought of wearing a double thickness of hose, custom declared leather leggings to be indispensable. But common sense now prevails to the extent of permitting an extra covering to be dispensed with when, instead of being useful, it is plainly inconvenient.

Those who decry the use of the skirt on the wheel are apt to urge that it renders knee motion very observable. But that argument could be more appropriately used against the blומר, which generally has more bagginess than is needed for freedom of action. Hebes with each upward movement of the knee there is an accumulation of material that accentuates its apparent height. The skirt is objective of so much condemnation by riders that it seems only fair to say a word inferentially in its favor when that can be conscientiously done.

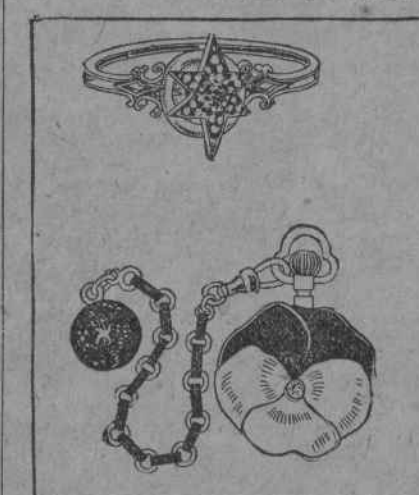
Real worth floats not with people's fancies, no more than a rock in the sea rises and falls with the tide.

CURIOUS WATCHES OWNED BY INTERESTING PEOPLE.

The scarabee, both open and shut, has been sketched from the original by the artist and gives the reader a good idea of this beautiful ornament. The wings, which fly open by touching a small spring, are enamelled and encrusted with diamonds—sixty-five diamonds to be painfully exact; the eyes are emeralds and here and there a ruby glitters.

Another odd watch is the property of Miss Madeleine Knowlton, Miss Knowlton has a pretty collection of watches, and valuable as well.

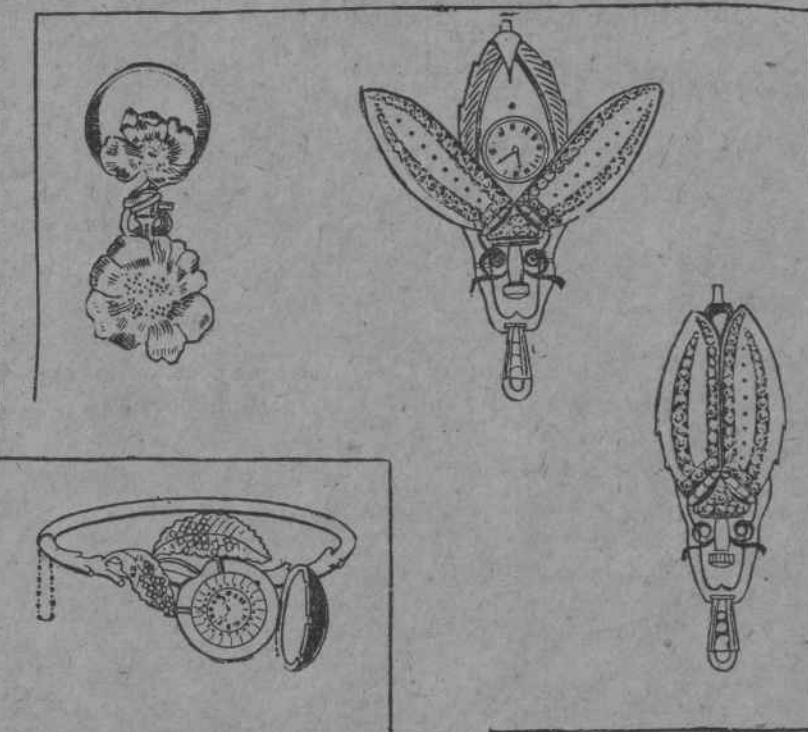
The one shown in the illustration is in semblance of a huge cherry, red and ripe enough to tempt any one. Like the scarabee, a pressure upon a hidden spring is necessary in order to display the face of the watch. It is a bracelet watch, as you see and one rather narrow gold crozier is enamelled brown to represent a branch.



The cherry itself is enamelled red and the leaves sparkle with diamonds, like precious dewdrops. An odd conceit is this cherry-ripe watch.

A watch, fashioned like a pansy, is not so new, perhaps, but is always pretty with its enamellings of rich purple and gold and a diamond sparkling in the centre. It is worn with a fob and is the property of Mrs. John Jacob Astor. She owns a baker's dozen, more or less, of watches, but the pansy watch, of them all, is her pet. One of her watches is set with a gem seldom seen, peridot, it is called. It is a pale green stone, somewhat the shade of a transparent rose-leaf held up to the sun.

Miss Pierpont Morgan has a vast number of watches, some seventy-two all told, and all are of the time of Louis XVI, and as near alike as the proverbial two peas. Nearly all have miniature paintings of Marie Antoinette or some grand dame, surrounded with a circle of pearls. Miss



Morgan also has a pansy watch, and one representing a primrose; this is set with topaz and diamonds.

She has also several examples of the brooch watch—the kind worn as a soldier wears his medals. If the fair owner chose she might so bedeck her corsage with these medal watches that the color of her gown could only be imagined, not seen.

Interesting is the bracelet watch shown in illustration 4. The diamond star cover flies up and discloses the watch beneath and diamonds displayed on the cover. Mrs. Burke-Roche, who is extremely fond of jewels, has a large collection of watches. To make a collection of watches is quite a fad nowadays, and to own as many as there are hours in the day, or even better, days in the year, is the ambition of many rich women. A wild rose watch, shown in illustration 5, is one of the collection of Mrs. Burke-Roche. It is worn as a chateleine, with a rose upon the cover of the watch as well as one to conceal the clasp

by which it fastens to the belt. Miss Virginia Fair has a similar watch, a wild rose chateleine watch. It differs somewhat from the one shown in the illustration. The watch itself is a microscopic affair and is enclosed by the petals of a wild rose.

Mrs. Hermann Oelrichs has a delightful taste in watches. One shown in illustration 6, is generously decorated with opals and diamonds and surmounted by a true-lovers' knot. No. 7 is another bracelet-watch. It is ornamented with a row of cabochon sapphires and diamonds alternating.

A tiny microscopic watch, not much bigger than the turquoise with which it is set, is a valued as well as a valuable member of Mrs. Oelrichs' jewel casket. A diamond coronet with a watch pendant is another conceit in this line owned by this lady.

Very costly is the diamond frog with a watch pendant belonging to another watch collector; also the diamond, ruby and emerald lizard from whose mouth hangs a watch. Apropos to animals in jewelry one woman in town has a unique collection, a perfect menagerie of various fish, bird and fowl—a rabbit brooch, for instance, a pussy cat stick pin and so forth. Taken as a whole the collection is rather interesting.

FASTING FOR BRAIN WORKERS.

A number of feminine brain workers have come to the conclusion that they can do better work by going without breakfast, eating only a light luncheon and making a o'clock dinner practically the only meal of the day. Many of those who have tried it declare that they have entirely overcome the faintness that they felt at first, and that they are able to put their faculties to better use than ever before.

BOARDING SCHOOL STRATEGY.

Psychology is considered so depressing a study by a class of young ladies in a certain select school uptown that the members have engaged an organ grinder to discourse popular airs under the windows during the lesson hour.

DECORATIVE HORRORS.

Once a man's wife shows symptoms of having been bitten by the prevalent horror-loving craze let him join a good club. His days of peace at home are numbered. His place is not there until a conflagration mercifully rids him of the horrifying objects his wife will have collected in the sacred name of art.

The portals of his home will be guarded by lions or griffins, masterpieces of the stonemason's craft. A voracious looking tiger stretched in an attitude reminiscent of hungry jungle days will greet him when he has passed the threshold, and a most uncomfortable greeting it is when the hall light is dim. What does it matter that it is only a rug? He nerves to be shattered recklessly for mere rugs?

Once the fad for horrors is well developed—and it grows with in a moment's speed—the hall lamp is either held by a fearful iron dragon or by a bronze serpent winding unceasingly up from the stair pedestal to the light. The drawing room cabinet shows a rare collection of Eastern idols, each one uglier than the others. The flowers no longer wave in clear glass vessels. They have their stems thrust into the cavernous recesses of grinning brass satyrs' heads that mock their freshness. The trail of the serpent and the grin of the satyr are over all parlor ornamentation.

And does the ignorant masculine being hope to escape the presence of the awful gods and demons of the East by moving from the drawing room to the dining room? By no means! The rings for coffee is from Benares. Its handle is one of the inevitable heads in miniature; about its base all manner of strange designs are writhed and twined, snake-like. The salt and pepper shakers will probably be china reproductions of some of the horrors of the curio cabinet. A serpent will lurk in the bottom of his tea cup and dragons will disport themselves over his dessert plate. All the horrors of nightmare will be his before he has left the festive board.

In the library he will find a stone sphinx for a paper weight, a writhing snake for a penholder and a Chinese idol for an ink well. Nowhere can he hide him from the awful art treasures in which his wife delights, once she falls a victim to the prevailing passion for collecting horrors. The club and the conflagration alone will save him.

THE EFFECT OF THE SUN.

Everybody does not know that constant exposure to the summer sun will fade one's hair. A woman who noticed last summer that her hair on the left side of her head was gradually assuming an appearance of having been washed in some chemical bleach, could not account for it until a friend suggested that it was owing to the fact that two of her hats were turned up on the left side, thus exposing that particular spot to the sun's rays.

A PRISONER FOR WRITING PATRIOTIC VERSES.



Manuela Cancino is a distinguished Cuban poet, now in prison in Havana for writing patriotic verses. For some time she lived in the insurgent camps, where her inspiring lines served to incite the enthusiasm of the soldiers. Her home is in Matanzas, her family there being one of the most respected and influential of the line.